

Draft by
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HISTORY OF THE OFFICE OF OPERATIONS
CHAPTER I

SECTION A - INCEPTION AND FIRST PHASES - 1946

1. Activation. The creation of an "Office of Operations" within the Central Intelligence Group seems to have been first discussed in Frankfurt, Germany, in the early summer of 1946. The Director of Central Intelligence, Lt. Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, who was attending the conference of Military Attachés in Frankfurt, asked Brig Gen. Edwin L. Sibert, then AC of S, G-2, USFET, to come to Washington to supervise the collection of foreign intelligence information by the newly-formed C.I.G. As if to foreshadow later debates on the subject, the question of whether the existing overt and covert collection activities should be combined under one directing headquarters was raised at this meeting, but it was decided to postpone a decision until General Sibert came on duty.

Two weeks after his arrival, the Office of Operations was officially activated by C.I.G. [redacted] on 17 October 1946, to consist of the "B" Deputy Staff, transferred from the Office of Special Operations and redesignated the "Commercial Contacts Branch," and the [redacted]

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[redacted] transferred from the Office of

Collection and Dissemination. The history of these units before their transfer to OO is given in Chapters II and III. Although the order does not assign a specific mission to the Office, it implies the continued existence of OSO for covert collection functions and the continued responsibility of OCD for collecting material from other government agencies, and thus indicates the type of collection to be undertaken by OO.

2. Functions. A formal, if somewhat ambiguous, statement of the mission and functions of the Office was drafted during the following month

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and approved on 19 November 1946, stating "The Mission of the Office of Operations is to effect collection of intelligence information for C.I.G., through coordination and supervision of designated C.I.G. organic collection agencies." The directive "initially" establishes the re-named [redacted]

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[redacted] and the Contact Branch (OO/C)

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as organic collection agencies. It indicates that [redacted] broadcasts of foreign nations," prepare and distribute transcriptions, and arrange for world-wide coverage through [redacted] and through reciprocal arrangements with similar national or foreign activities. It assigns Contact Division the function of collecting foreign intelligence information "through the medium of American business concerns and scientific, educational and religious organizations with connections abroad, and American residents travelling abroad," provides for coordination of the domestic collection activities of "member agencies" (i.e. the IAC agencies) through the establishment of inter-agency field offices in the US and through "coordinating directives," and indicates that field operations may use "such cover as may be appropriate". The directive further indicates that no research and evaluation functions will be carried on by OO except the grading of information as to the reliability of source and that ORE will provide OO with evaluations of "information obtained through each source."

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3. Staffing. During the first six months of its existence, OO operated without any approved T/O, borrowing positions or having its personnel officially assigned to other Offices. The appointment of a Deputy Assistant Director for Operations, [redacted] was made possible only through the use of unvouchered funds. The personnel records of early employees of OO headquarters look as if the Office staff had been assembled from every other unit in C.I.G., whereas they were actually recruited from outside the

Agency and carried against OSO or ORE T/O positions which they never held. Early in October, the AD/O asked for a staff of 3 sections and 18 people for his immediate office; on 18 December 1946, however, he officially revised this request to total 11 positions, including three for a "Planning and Coordination Staff", one high-level Administrative Assistant, and one trainee slot. A ceiling of 10 positions was established for OO headquarters on 5 February 1947, but the tentative T/O was not approved until 16 April 1947. Similar delays were experienced in obtaining the first authorized T/O's and position classifications for [redacted]

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4. Transfer of Documents Branch to OO. The initial assignment to the Office of Reports and Estimates of the forerunner of Foreign Documents Division, the "Washington Documents Center", may have been partially due to these T/O difficulties as well as to the active role played by representatives of ORE in the first negotiations for the transfer of this activity from the War and Navy Departments to C.I.G. (See Chapter IV) On 31 December 1946, however, a retroactive order was issued assigning WDC to OO, "effective 1 December 1946," designating it as the Documents Branch, and indicating that its primary function was "to receive foreign documents for cataloguing, summarizing, and translation." (See Chapter IV)

SECTION B - EARLY DEVELOPMENT - 1947

Thus by January 1947, a year after the creation of the C.I.G., the Office of Operations was functioning with a small headquarters staff and three major collecting components in much the same form and with virtually the same mission under which it operates today. The history of the Office during the intervening five years is not marked by any major reorganizations or radical changes in function. It shows a gradual development through the addition of new responsibilities always related to those already carried by

the Office, and a slow but steady expansion of personnel and facilities to respond to the increasing requirements for information from overt sources and for the services provided by the Office. Changes in the statement of the "mission" of OO (see Appendix I) reflect the variations in the official concept of the position and functions of CIA within the governmental intelligence structure rather than any actual changes in the operations or objectives of the Office.

During 1947, several new activities proposed by one or another of the IAC agencies were undertaken by OO, and one was turned down. As requested by the War Department, C.I.G. took on further functions with respect to the intelligence exploitation of captured German documents and the preparation of an Industrial Card File therefrom (see Chapter IV, Section B). These were largely assigned to the Documents Branch, which was simultaneously re-named "Foreign Documents Branch (FDB, now FDD). In September, two months after C.I.G. had become C.I.A. by the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, Maj. Gen. George C. McDonald, the Director of Intelligence, Department of the Air Force, made a similar suggestion that CIA should take over such technical intelligence functions of T-2, Wright Field (Air Materiel Command Intelligence) as might better be performed centrally. After an inspection of T-2 by representatives of ICAPS and OO, it was decided on 23 October 1947 that none of the functions of T-2 were of "such common concern to IAC members" that they should be assumed by CIA.

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Foreign Documents Branch. This exploitation of foreign language publications by PDB had developed partly as a result of its common service function with respect to documents captured in World War II and partly in response to requests from CIA and the other IAC agencies for coverage of more current foreign language material. Despite these requirements and repeated discussion of the scope and wording of an NSCID during the past three years by Ad Hoc Committees, the Standing Committee of the IAC, and even by the Intelligence Advisory Committee (see Chapter IV, page 40 and Appendix V) final agreement on the terms of such a directive has not yet been reached. Following various IAC requests for translation service by CIA and a proposal on 25 April 1949 by the Deputy Director of Intelligence, General Staff, U.S. Army that CIA undertake the "translation of intelligence material of recognized joint interest" it was decided by the Director of Central Intelligence (Memorandum to IAC members dated 9 May 1949) that centralization of the translation function was impractical but that CIA would "coordinate the intelligence—translation effort by master index," would assist the IAC agencies by providing a "limited amount of translation service in certain less common languages" and would "continue the exploitation of foreign language material of joint intelligence interest" within its capabilities. All of these services have been continued up to the present and constitute part of the current functions of Foreign Documents Division. The question of an NSCID to authorize CIA to coordinate the procurement and exploitation of foreign language publications, for intelligence purposes, and to perform certain centralized documentary functions, is still

under active consideration. (See Appendix IV)

SECTION E - CHANGES IN 1948

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The growth and development of [redacted] and Contact Branch, subsequent to the assignment to them of definite responsibilities by [redacted] and 7, respectively, and the gradual assumption of new functions by FDD on the basis of internal directives are described in detail in the following chapters. During 1948 the total "on duty" strength of the Office of Operations increased more rapidly than at any other period during its history

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(from [redacted] employees, see Appendix II); this increase was effected in spite of concurrent T/O cuts totaling more than 50 positions. Internal reorganizations took place in Contact Branch and FDD, the latter establishing a "translation service" for CIA offices and arranging for linguist personnel awaiting clearance to work in an "unclassified pool." OO headquarters and Contact Branch also moved from 2210 E Street to the Yards and Docks Building of the Navy Department early in the year. Despite various subsequent moves, the physical separation of the components of the Office and the location of FDD and [redacted] in separate buildings at some distance from the Office of the Assistant Director has unfortunately continued throughout the history of the organization. In June 1948, General Sibert

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 returned to military duty overseas and was replaced as Assistant Director by Mr. [redacted] USAF, was simultaneously appointed Deputy Asst. Dir. and held this position until he left the Agency a year later.

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SECTION F - THE "DULLES REPORT" and NSC 50

1. "Dulles Report." In their investigation of CIA and the national organization for intelligence, the Jackson-Dulles-Correa Survey Group made

a careful study of the activities of OO during the course of 1948. In their report to the National Security Council on 1 January 1949, they concluded that OO consisted of three distinctive activities, representing "useful and recognized functions in their own field" but without any particular relation to each other. On the basis of (a) the assistance which Contact Branch could provide to OSO and OPC in arranging [redacted]

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[redacted] (b) the relationship between aliens and foreign nationality groups in this country and the overseas operations [redacted]

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(c) the similar problems facing OSO and OO/C field collection operations and consumer requirements and (d) the comparable need for security and source protection, the Committee recommended that Contact Branch be integrated with OSO and OPC under single over-all direction (in a new "Operations Division") within CIA. It recommended that FDR become part of a proposed "Research and Reports" Division on the basis that its work should be performed in close relationship to and under the guidance of the consumer agencies. In view of this dispersal of OO functions, the Committee had some difficulty in deciding where [redacted] should be placed; as a purely overt activity, it was unsuitable for inclusion with the covert offices, and as an operating function, it did not fit into the static "Research" divisions. The Committee concluded that if [redacted] remained a part of CIA, it should probably be administered by the new "Operations Division," but its product should be immediately available for analysis by the research components.

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2. NSC 50. This recommendation concerning [redacted] was one of the few elements of the Dulles Report which was specifically disapproved by the

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National Security Council. NSC 50, issued on 1 July 1949, indicated that the proposed division should include only covert and semi-covert activities conducting field operations (OSO, OPC, and Contact Branch, OO) and that it should not administer [redacted]. The recommended transfer of FDB to a "Research and Reports" unit was approved.

The continued existence of the Office of Operations, as such, was therefore in question during a long period after the issuance of NSC 50. Since other major provisions of this paper were not implemented immediately, those affecting OO were also left in abeyance. In addition, it was felt that the common function of the three OO divisions, the direct operational collection of foreign intelligence information from overt sources was not sufficiently recognized by the Dulles Committee. Although the amount of information obtainable by overt operations was emphasized in their report, the need for coordinated direction of the various aspects of the overt collection function, as performed by CIA, was not considered. This need was particularly obvious with respect to [redacted]-FDB activities, due to the inherent overlap between foreign radio and press materials and the closely related operations of the two branches in the fields of translation and general coverage of foreign language sources. Another factor militating against the transfer of FDB to the Office of Research and Reports after the formation of the latter, was the specialization of ORR in economic and geographic research. Since OSI, OSO, OPC, and the IAC agencies all had need of FDB's services, to varying extents and in different fields, it was felt that the branch should not be controlled by one of the Agency's two research units. The "static"

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functions of the latter, as indicated by the Dulles Committee, were to be concerned with the evaluation, production, and coordination of intelligence as opposed to the conduct of operational activities. The considerations preventing transfer of the Contact Branch to the new "Operations Division" were rather different in nature: as a "field intelligence collection operation," within the U.S., its functions were believed by the Dulles Committee to be analogous to OSO's collection activities overseas. Nevertheless, the Committee itself stated that OO/C sources "do not wish to be embroiled in anything that resembles espionage, despite their eagerness to place at the disposal of the Government information which they acquire in their normal course of business." This fact had been borne out by the experience of the [redacted] of which had first been established under [redacted] 25X1A but had found within a few months that this semi-covert status merely complicated its relationships with businessmen and other sources.